

Large-scale population movements into and from Britain south of Hadrian's Wall in the fourth to sixth centuries AD

Article

Published Version

Dark, K. (2003) Large-scale population movements into and from Britain south of Hadrian's Wall in the fourth to sixth centuries AD. Reading Medieval Studies, XXIX. pp. 31-49. ISSN 0950-3129 Available at <https://centaur.reading.ac.uk/84556/>

It is advisable to refer to the publisher's version if you intend to cite from the work. See [Guidance on citing](#).

Publisher: University of Reading

All outputs in CentAUR are protected by Intellectual Property Rights law, including copyright law. Copyright and IPR is retained by the creators or other copyright holders. Terms and conditions for use of this material are defined in the [End User Agreement](#).

www.reading.ac.uk/centaur

CentAUR

Central Archive at the University of Reading

Reading's research outputs online

Large-scale population movements into and from Britain south of Hadrian's Wall in the fourth to sixth centuries AD

K. R. Dark

The University of Reading

Modern scholars have often characterised the fifth and sixth centuries AD as a 'Migration Period', defined by major population movements within, and between, areas of Europe and the Mediterranean. In relation to Britain, the best known of these is the 'Anglo-Saxon settlement' but it is usually said that there were a lot of other mass-migrations into and out of Britain during this period. So far as the area south of Hadrian's Wall is concerned, probably the most widely discussed are a migration from what had been Roman Britain to Armorica, a migration from southern Ireland to southwest Wales and a movement from the Edinburgh area, the land of the Roman-period Votadinii, to northwest Wales – to repel Irish migrants already settled there. It has also been claimed that there was an Irish colonization of Cornwall, and British emigration to Galicia, Normandy and even the Rhineland.¹

This paper seeks to investigate whether there is convincing evidence that any of these migrations happened. Let us begin with the migration of the Votadinii (or Gododdin to use their later name) to North Wales, which is supposed to have taken place in the fourth or fifth century. The sum of the evidence for this migration is the *Historia Brittonum*, a few place-names first recorded in the post-medieval period, late medieval and later Welsh folklore, and the excavated cemetery at Tandderwen.²

Both *Historia Brittonum* and medieval Welsh folklore are notoriously unreliable as sources for the fifth century. The place-names are unable to be dated closely and offer nothing more solid.

But the cemetery does at first sight offer one the prospect of recognising something genuinely 'north British' about fifth-century North Wales.³

Tandderwen is a small 'Early Christian' cemetery, with a series of burials inside rectilinear ditches which (according to the excavators) originally had overlying barrows. These barrows closely resemble so-called 'square-ditched' barrows found in northern Britain, dating from the fifth century and from both earlier and later centuries. The barrows might represent the burials of a secular elite group, perhaps a family of local aristocrats or rulers, possibly even claiming ownership of the land by means of funerary rituals.⁴

This would seem to imply a strong north British connection at about the right time. Unfortunately, the radiocarbon dating of the Tandderwen barrows suggests that they post-date the fifth century and – worse still – the relevant northern burials are not in what was the territory of the Votadinii. They are in an area which most modern scholars would see as part of the Pictish zone north of the Firth. Moreover, the Tandderwen burials are a very long way from Anglesey, said by *Historia Brittonum* to be the focus of the Votadinian migration. They are located in what was to become the modern county of Clwyd, not necessarily even in what may have been either Ordovician or later Venedotian territory in the fifth or sixth century.⁵

The Irish predecessor of the Votadinian migration also seems illusory. The material to back up a fifth-century Irish presence in northwest Wales is insubstantial, even in contrast to that for continuing local British elites. In total, it comprises a few ogham stones and Latin inscriptions containing Irish personal names – not even all fifth- rather than sixth-century in date. Again, there are some medieval or later Irish place-names and there is post-medieval folklore, but these are inadmissible as evidence for a fifth-century migration on chronological grounds. One should recall, also, that this is part of the same corpus of toponymy that

called Romano-British settlements in north Wales 'Irishmen's huts', so plainly it cannot wholly be trusted!⁶

Assuming that we rule out the place-names and folklore, it is worth asking why we should believe that the presence of ogam stones, or stones bearing Irish names, indicate Irish mass-migration. Of course, ogam is an Irish language script and ogam stones may even be an Irish invention, but one can think of many possible explanations for a handful of Irish migrants in northwest Wales in this period. To give a few examples, one might envisage warriors fighting as mercenaries or exiles in foreign courts – perhaps supported by their own warbands who would commemorate them in the traditional way – or one might imagine Irish clergy operating within the British Church (we have plenty of very well-travelled Irish clergy by the seventh century) or on pilgrimage. Or one could imagine diplomatic or other marriages of Irish aristocrats from just across the water into the local ruling families. This is without even considering more 'everyday' explanations like trade or the recruitment of Irish specialists such as doctors and metalworkers.⁷

A few Irish inscriptions do not show anything more than the presence of a few Irish speakers of sufficient rank or role to merit being memorialised by an inscription. Of course, there could have been more Irish people in North Wales at this time but we do not have any more evidence.

Furthermore, the inscriptions cannot be closely dated. They may, at best, be assigned to several generations within the fifth and sixth centuries. It is extremely unlikely that they all represent fifth-century migrants and, if not, why was an Irish elite still present in North Wales if it had been driven out when the kingdom of Gwynedd was founded?

The same arguments can be applied to the alleged Irish settlement in Cornwall, which in this period was probably just the western part of the British kingdom of Dumnonia. This kingdom, stretching, perhaps, to the Devonshire Avon east of Exeter and to

the River Parrett in Somerset, appears otherwise to have had a strongly British character in the relevant period.⁸

There, the few ogam stones or inscriptions containing what may be Irish names, seem suspiciously near the main north-south route across the peninsula or at harbour sites. Again, there are undatable place-names and pieces of later medieval folklore, but in this case there is also an artefact type claimed to be specifically Irish: Grass-Marked Pottery. Unfortunately, Grass-Marked Pottery has been re-dated in recent years on firm stratigraphical evidence to, at earliest, after c.600 and probably later than c.700. It was still in use at the beginning of the Norman period, and has never been found convincingly stratified with imported Mediterranean pottery or other diagnostically fifth- to seventh-century artefacts.⁹

The evidence from archaeology of settlement continuity and of a cultural life focussed on a fusion of Romano-British and Christian components in Dumnonia is very strong, as most clearly seen at Tintagel. Aside from the inscriptions, there are no diagnostically Irish artefacts of fifth- or sixth-century date anywhere in Dumnonia. But there are many Merovingian and Byzantine objects from fifth- to sixth-century southwest Britain. Yet who would claim that there was a Merovingian or Byzantine colonization of fifth- or sixth-century Dumnonia?¹⁰

So, we can see that the evidence for anything more than small-scale Irish contacts – the sort of thing that we would expect around the Irish Sea from diplomacy, warfare, trade and religious and cultural contacts evidenced elsewhere – is conspicuously lacking. Nor can we even be sure that everything that seems to be Irish relates to people from Ireland rather than from areas inside Britain. Several scholars, beginning with Lynette Olson and Anne Preston-Jones, have noted the close resemblance between the material culture of the earliest Christian sites in Dyfed and Cornwall.¹¹

To investigate this we need to re-direct our attention to southwest Wales and the supposed Irish areas of Dyfed and Brycheiniog. These are zones in which there are too many ogam stones to be explained in any other way than the widespread use of

the Irish language. Latin inscriptions, too, more often contain one or more Irish names, and there is evidence for the continuing use of spoken Irish by those who erected the inscriptions. There is even one memorial that may commemorate a Demetian king (perhaps, but not necessarily, Gildas's Vortipor) in ogham script. So there is contemporary evidence of many Irish speakers among the fifth- and sixth-century population and that these included the social elite.¹²

However, it is not at all clear where the geographical boundary between the Irish and Brittonic languages was in the fourth and fifth centuries, or for that matter earlier. Modern scholars have tended to assume that this was at the Irish Sea, but there is no evidence from Roman Britain that necessitates that this was the case. Even if, say, we could establish that Irish was only spoken in later Ireland in the time of Ptolemy's famous map of Britain, this would not ensure that this was true in the fourth century, let alone the fifth. Linguistic frontiers might have shifted, not necessarily because of population movement rather than cultural or economic interactions across the Irish Sea, or for that matter changing attitudes to the Roman Empire and its culture among the Britons or Irish.¹³

There seems to be no reason why people in this area might not have spoken Irish during the Roman period, and even before. Perhaps parts of western Britain might have been parts of Ireland in cultural and linguistic terms as late as the fifth and sixth centuries?

There are several reasons why this is a plausible interpretation. First, the relationship between communication speed and distance could well have focussed southwest Welsh networks of external contact on Ireland and Dumnonia, rather than – say – the upper Severn estuary.

Second, there is strong evidence of cultural similarities between fifth- and sixth-century Ireland and Roman-British southwest Wales. For example, it has often been noticed that the material culture of Early Christian Ireland bears strikingly little resemblance to that of the Irish Iron Age compared to its similarity to that of Roman Britain. In particular, the characteristic ring-forts of sixth-

century Ireland find their easiest parallel in the 'small enclosures' of Dyfed and Dumnonia, dated between the end of the Iron Age and the sixth century AD, and the iron tools and other everyday objects used by their inhabitants often also resemble those from Roman Britain. Yet there was apparently no significant trade between Roman Britain and Ireland.¹⁴

So, unless we are going to claim that this was due to British mass-migration to Ireland, which really would be a surprise, the most logical explanation seems to be very close and intense cultural similarities arising from profound and sustained interaction. As Harold Mytum has pointed out in his wide-ranging study of the 'origins of Early Christian Ireland', such interaction conforms closely to the expectations of Colin Renfrew's 'peer-polity interaction' theory. In the fifth-century and later, the Church probably facilitated these contacts but the ring-forts and military hardware may hint at secular interactions also. These transferred cultural characteristics from Dyfed, and perhaps – but not necessarily – Dumnonia, to Ireland during the Roman period.¹⁵

The invention of ogam was perhaps the most notable of the innovations to arise from this situation. The script is used for writing Irish, yet is based on an awareness of Latin grammar. As such, it shows how Romano-British and Irish cultural characteristics could co-exist and be re-combined in a context of cultural juxtaposition. It also warns against assuming that any sort of cultural separation was inevitably practised between Irish-speakers and Britons.¹⁶

Being ethnically British but linguistically Irish may have been a possibility more easily countenanced by fifth- and sixth-century inhabitants of Dyfed, or for that matter Ireland, than by modern philologists. Even if the linguistic boundary was shifted to the eastern borders of Dyfed and Brycheiniog we cannot assume that such areas always considered themselves to be Irish rather than British in political or ethnic terms. Indeed, apart from Patrick in the fifth-century and Gildas in the sixth, we have very little indication from written sources of how fifth- and sixth-century Insular

populations as a whole perceived their ethnicities. Political units may be recognisable, and cultural affinities with Late Antique Europe may be discerned, but whether everyone in, say, sixth-century Gwent considered him- or her-self a Briton one cannot say.¹⁷

This may be why Gildas, who plainly did not like either the Irish *or* Vortipor king of Dyfed, fails to rebuke the king for his Irish ancestors. Yet so far as we know, the same dynasty celebrated its Irishness as a key aspect of its identity. If Gildas considered Vortipor an Irishman, then one might expect at least a mention of this – or was this ruler in some way both British and Irish. Perhaps he was an Irish-speaking Briton?¹⁸

In fact, a similar pattern is also found at the other end of Britain, north of Hadrian's Wall, in Dalriada in South West Scotland. There, the well-studied local archaeology does resemble that of Ireland but it does so from the Iron Age onward, with no perceptible change in the period in which the Irish migration is alleged to have taken place. Again, the only artefacts apart from ogam inscriptions that may be culturally Irish are sherds of Grass-Marked Pottery, and these post-date c.700 here too. Even at the archetypal Dalriadan royal centre, Dunadd, recently published in great detail by Alan Lane and Ewan Campbell, distinctively Irish elements are few and far between.¹⁹

One can see a consistent pattern in both Dyfed and Dalriada, in which a linguistically-Irish area has a material culture apparently developing straight out of the local past with few intrusive elements. If one took away the ogam inscriptions and the textual references telling us that these were Irish kingdoms in the fifth to seventh centuries, one would be left with little indication that this was the case.²⁰

So, it may well be that we have grounds for interpreting both areas as Irish-speaking from the Iron Age onward. To put it another way, we can explain all the apparently conflicting evidence if we just abandon our preconceptions about where the linguistic boundary between Irish and Brittonic lay and shift it eastward. Of

course, whether these areas were monolingual, or always bilingual is another matter. One might well imagine that Brittonic and Irish could have been spoken side-by-side in parts of western Britain in the Iron Age or later. Again, we have no evidence to contradict this.

This raises the possibility that the usually-perceived divisions between Ireland and Britain are anachronistic in these periods. It also questions whether we are correct in assuming that a single 'native' language was spoken in either area in the Iron Age or Romano-British periods. Perhaps what defined the 'Irish' and 'Britons' was not their language but political identities or shared histories.²¹

Of course, another consequence of this is that we may need to abandon the notion of invasions from Ireland into Wales and the southwest of England. There is nothing about the archaeology or history of fifth- or sixth-century western Britain that would necessitate that these ever took place. Interestingly, an entirely independent piece of work by Ewan Campbell has come to a similar conclusion regarding Dalriada alone.²²

That is, the Irish kingdoms of fifth-century Britain may have contained Irish-speaking populations in the Roman period and possibly before, and not all of these need have been ethnically Irish. Ethnic identification might, of course, also have changed over time: Irishness may have been emphasised or 'played-down' at different periods or by different groups. This, of course, has wide-ranging implications for cultural relations between Roman Britain and Ireland and for the origins of *ogam*.

However, both Irish-speakers and Britons were probably moving around in small numbers throughout the period. Indeed, the Irish found in Cornwall and Devon are perhaps more likely to have come from Dyfed than Ireland. There were also migrant Britons – a member of the *Dobunni* is apparently commemorated on a sixth-century inscription in Devon and a citizen of *Elmet* (near Leeds) mentioned on another inscription of this date in Wales. But none of

these movements need be anything resembling a large-scale population shift from one area to another.²³

In order to identify some genuine mass-migrations we need to turn to the East of Britain, where there is at least evidence of serious societal disruption in the fifth century. In fact, part of eastern Britain may have already been losing a significant portion of its rural population before 400, as recent evidence from East Anglia – amassed and analysed by local archaeologists – may suggest. In this area at least, and possibly more widely in eastern Britain, large tracts of land appear to have been deserted in the late fourth century, possibly including whole ‘small-towns’ and villages. This does not seem to be a localised change in settlement location, size or character but genuine desertion. One can well imagine populations pulling back from the coast and from exposed areas of the fens in the face of intensified barbarian raiding in the later fourth century, although we do not know that this was the mechanism involved.²⁴

If a lot of people were moving away from this zone, where were they going? One possibility is that they were fleeing westward ahead of the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ raids. I know of no evidence that refutes this, although widespread settlement continuity in western Britain seems increasingly likely, suggesting that if new populations were coming into those areas they were arriving in the context of a surviving, essentially Romano-British, landscape.²⁵

Another possibility is that the people of the Romano-British east midlands were migrating overseas. The Franks called Armorica ‘Brittany’ and its inhabitants ‘Britons’ by the sixth century and there is a lot of contemporary written evidence for British migrants on the Continent, including British clergy and secular leaders. This has been the subject of very longstanding study, in relation to which the late Pierre-Roland Giot and Léon Fleuriot deserve special mention.²⁶

How many Britons left, and where (if anywhere) they settled for long apart from in Brittany, are unclear. There is a good textual case to be made for British settlers in Galicia but whether they

came from Britain or Brittany is unknown. Fleuriot pointed to possible British communities on the Rhine and in Normandy, but one should remember that Bretons and Britons were not differentiated for centuries to come and confusion may have arisen from this alone. It seems likely that at least some of these migrants were from southeast Britain: the very landscape that archaeology may hint was being deserted in the final decades of the fourth century.²⁷

Far more problematical is the significance of suggestions of British communities in eastern Ireland. There were certainly Britons in Ireland by the fifth century, Patrick for one. But whether they were there in any greater number, or for any other reasons, than the miscellany of Irish-speaking men and women in western Britain is much less certain. Just because Old Irish texts tell us that one or another group considered themselves to be British in origin does not, of course, mean that they were. Being British might have carried a particular prestige at least at specific times and in specific circles – alternatively British and Irish identities may have been so mixed that this blurred the ethnic labels people attached to themselves or to others.²⁸

Settlement desertion in eastern Britain also opened the way for the best-attested population movement of the period: the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ migration to Britain. In this case it is not so much a matter of showing that people moved, as determining how many they were, where they settled and when this occurred. These questions are not nearly as simple to answer as once seemed likely, although we may be approaching a better understanding of the chronology of this migration as a result of important work by a series of scholars.

It is possible to be confident that some people did move. I say this because there has come to be a view of this period that all but denies anyone traversed the North Sea at all. Essentially, it is said, the emergence of what may be termed an ‘Anglo-Saxon’ culture in eastern Britain by the sixth century could just be a sort of fashion change.²⁹

Although the arguments adduced to claim 'Anglo-Saxon' buildings as substantially British probably cannot be credited, there *is* quite a lot of evidence from 'Anglo-Saxon' cemeteries for the survival of distinctive Romano-British funerary customs. For example, as Betty O'Brien and Roger White have pointed out, decapitated burial – cutting off the head and placing it elsewhere in the grave – is an 'Anglo-Saxon' burial rite apparently derived from Late Roman Britain.³⁰

The adoption of furnished inhumation, often in orientated graves, may also imply British links. This was a common rite in Late Roman Britain, but was much less common (although not wholly unknown) in those parts of Continental Europe where the 'Anglo-Saxons' were said by Bede to have come from. This suggests that there were Britons left in the fifth-century East, and there are also some large gaps in the 'Anglo-Saxon' cemetery distribution that could represent British (or perhaps Christian) areas. Not all of these areas without 'Anglo-Saxon' burials can be ascribed to the chances of archaeological discovery and, as James Graham-Campbell has demonstrated, there is compelling evidence from western Britain for Britons being willing to use 'Anglo-Saxon' artefacts. 'Anglo-Saxon' material culture was, therefore, culturally acceptable to what we call 'Britons', whatever they called themselves. The presence of such 'Anglo-Saxon' artefacts is not, then, enough on its own to require the absence of Britons even where these occur.³¹

However, the striking thing about much of the portable material culture of eastern Britain in the late fifth and sixth centuries is its similarity to that of the area immediately north of the northwest Roman frontiers on continental Europe, termed here a 'Germanic' culture. Again, this is not to say that there is no trace of any British contribution to 'Anglo-Saxon' art and artefacts but that the big change after the late fifth century is how strikingly the brooches, burial vessels and other artefact types resemble those of areas beyond the north of the former Roman frontier on continental Europe.³²

As already mentioned, these changes are neither evenly distributed nor identical in character across the so-called 'Anglo-Saxon' East. By the sixth century they are found most profoundly in what Bede and subsequent commentators have called the 'Anglian' area. There, a Germanic culture appears to have replaced that of Late Roman Britain, with British survivals apparently largely restricted to pockets while elsewhere almost every aspect of Romano-British settlement, burial and material culture becomes radically transformed.³³

To the south of this zone, we find another in which the sixth-century situation is much less well-defined. It is in this area that the sort of continuities from Late Roman Britain noted above are most strongly represented, and in which inhumation burial predominates. Here, artefacts which show affinities with the Romano-British past are more common, and studies of specific areas have revealed what may well be complex patterns of interaction between Romano-British and 'Anglo-Saxon' populations, as around Dorchester on Thames and Chichester. This zone approximates roughly to Bede's 'Saxon' area, although it would also include the parts of southern Britain he assigned to the Jutes, another Germanic people.³⁴

That is, there are two broad zones: in one there is little trace of survivals from the Romano-British past and much evidence for an intrusive Germanic culture, in the other there is more evidence of Romano-British survival and less indication of an 'undiluted' Germanic culture. Indeed, some sort of cultural 'fusion' may have taken place between local British and Germanic cultural traditions in the latter zone during this period. Of course, there are many areas where these two zones fade into each other or are less precisely defined. In some of the large unexplained gaps in the distribution of 'Anglo-Saxon' cemeteries, there is an increasing amount of evidence for what may well be British activity of fifth- or sixth-century date.

The most obvious explanation of the pattern found in the 'Anglian' area is of large-scale migration. In this area, the Romano-British cultural tradition is replaced by an intrusive Germanic one.

But in Bede's 'Saxon' and 'Jutish' kingdoms there seems much less to commend an interpretation of population replacement, although it seems unlikely that there was no Germanic component at all. However, presumably this was in some way different in its relationship to local Britons so that cultural combinations took place. These produced identities and things that were far more complex in their origins than simply being either 'Germanic' or 'British'.³⁵

We may also be able to date the formation of these generalised zones. The so-called 'Anglian' area saw much of the earliest 'Anglo-Saxon' activity, perhaps beginning around the middle of the fifth century. It is only later in the fifth century that 'Anglo-Saxon' artefacts, structures and burial rites appear across the majority of the other area. This may have been a result of conquest, gradual drift through intermarriage and peaceful co-existence or through the arrival of new migrants.³⁶

Of course, these can only be generalisations, but they fit both with the observable archaeological patterns and with the little acceptable textual evidence for this period that can survive rigorous source-criticism. In particular, an especially close fit is with David Dumville's reworking of the chronology of Book 1 of Gildas's *De Excidio*: the earliest migrants settle in eastern Britain in the mid-fifth century, British rulers recruit others to 'contain' them and then the famous 'Saxon revolt' takes place in the late fifth century. Dumville, working independently of the – then unavailable – current archaeological chronology, suggested that this rapid expansion in 'Anglo-Saxon' control took place around 470. The imprecise archaeological chronology suggests c.450-75. This is a striking correlation and a rapid extension of the zone under 'Anglo-Saxon' political authorities would explain why 'Anglo-Saxon' culture expanded across this second area in the late fifth century.³⁷

One might also relate these changes to the pattern we saw earlier in relation to British population movements. The areas where we have most indications of an intrusive Germanic culture are precisely those places where we have most evidence of late

fourth-century abandonment. Whatever the reasons for that abandonment, it may have left large tracts of eastern Britain much more devoid of population than we have been used to supposing.

Thus, we might really only have two large-scale migrations south of Hadrian's Wall: the movement of Britons *en masse* from the east of the island in the fifth, and perhaps late fourth, centuries and the movement of Germanic people – the ones we call the 'Anglo-Saxons' – into the same areas during the mid-fifth century and, perhaps especially, later. No wonder scholars whose focus is on the South East often tell us that Roman Britain ended abruptly in the fifth century or – extremists say – late fourth century. In these areas it probably often did.

NOTES

¹ Such arguments were a staple of 1970s works including: L. Alcock, *Arthur's Britain*, Harmondsworth and New York, Penguin, 1971. For more specific arguments: M. Richards, 'The Irish settlements in south-west Wales – a topographical approach', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 90 (1960), 133-52; J. D. Bullock, 'Early Christian memorial formulae', *Archaeologia Cambrensis* 105 (1956), 167-96; C. Thomas, 'The Irish settlements in post-Roman western Britain: a survey of the evidence', *Journal of the Royal Institution of Cornwall* 4.4 (1971), 251-74.

² R. G. Gruffydd, 'From Gododdin to Gwynedd: reflections on the story of Cunedda', *Studia Celtica* 24/5 (1989/90), 1-14.

³ D. N. Dumville, 'The historical value of the *Historia Brittonum*', *Arthurian Literature* 6 (1986), 1-26. For archaeology of Anglesey in this period: N. Edwards, 'Anglesey in the early middle ages: the archaeological evidence', *Transactions of the Anglesey Antiquarian Society* (1986), 19-41.

⁴ K. S. Brassil, W. G. Owen and W. J. Britnell, 'Prehistoric and early medieval cemeteries at Tandderwen, near Denbigh, Clwyd', *Archaeological Journal* 148 (1992), 46-97.

⁵ K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 181-4.

⁶ For examples: B. G. Charles, *Place-names of Pembrokeshire* (2 vols.), National Library of Wales Aberystwyth, 1992; C. Thomas, *And shall these mute stones speak? Post-Roman inscriptions in western Britain*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1994; P. Sims-Williams, *The Celtic inscriptions of Britain: phonology and chronology, c. 400-1200*, Oxford and Boston USA, Blackwell, 2003. For the archaeological dating of 'Irishmen's huts': R. S. Kelly, 'Recent research on the hut-group settlements of North-West Wales', in *Conquest, co-existence and change*, ed. B. C. Burnham and J. L. Davies, Lampeter, St David's University College Press, 1990, pp. 102-11.

⁷ T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'Britons in Ireland c.550-800', in *Ildánach Ildírech*, ed. J. Carey et al., Andover and Aberystwyth, Celtic Studies Publications, 1999, pp. 15-26; D. N. Dumville, 'British missionary activity in Ireland', in *St Patrick AD 493-1993*, ed. D. N. Dumville et al., Woodbridge, Boydell, 1993, pp. 133-45. On the origins of ogham: A. Harvey, 'Early literacy in Ireland: the evidence of ogham', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 14 (1987), 1-15; A. Harvey, 'The ogham inscriptions and the Roman alphabet: two traditions or one?', *Archaeology Ireland* 4.1 (1990), 13-14; A. Harvey, 'Problems in dating the origin of the ogham script', in *Romans, runes and ogham: medieval inscriptions in the Insular World and on the Continent*, ed. J. Higgitt et al., Donnington, Shaun Tyas, 2001, pp. 37-50. For a recent discussion of the linguistic aspects of fifth- and sixth-century inscriptions in Britain: P. Sims-Williams, *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: Phonology and chronology, c. 400-1200*, Oxford, The Philological Society/Blackwell, 2003.

⁸ K. R. Dark, *Civitas to Kingdom*, London, Leicester University Press, London, 1994, pp. 91-5

⁹ C. Thomas, 'Irish colonists in south-west Britain', *World Archaeology* 5 (1973), 5-13; M. Ryan, 'Native pottery in early historic Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* C73 (1973), 619-45. The best discussion of grass-marked pottery in Cornwall is still: G. Hutchinson, 'The Bar-lug pottery of Cornwall', *Cornish Archaeology* 18 (1979), 81-103. Since Hutchinson's article the distribution of grass-marked pottery has remained almost entirely 'Cornish' but dating has been revised on the basis of its relationship to stratified (seventh-century) E-Ware: A. Preston-Jones and P. Rose, 'Medieval Cornwall', *Cornish Archaeology* 25 (1986), 135-185 (pp. 175-6); P. A. Rahtz, 'Fabric U, grass-marked', in *Cannington Cemetery*, P. Rahtz, S. Hirst and S. M. Wright, Britannia Monographs Number 17, London, English Heritage, 2000, p. 298. By far the best corpus and discussion of the Dumnonian inscriptions is: E. Okasha, *Corpus of the Early Christian inscribed stones of south-west Britain*, London, Leicester

University Press, 1993. For the harbourside and routeway distribution: K. R. Dark, *Civitas to Kingdom*, London, Leicester University Press, 1994, pp. 92-4.

¹⁰ The best discussion of the context of such imports is A. Harris, *Byzantium, Britain and the West*, Stroud, Tempus, 2003.

¹¹ L. Olson, *Early Monasteries in Cornwall*, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1989; A. Preston-Jones, 'Decoding Cornish churchyards', in *The early Church in Wales and the West*, ed. N. Edwards and A. Lane, Oxford, Oxbow, 1992, pp. 104-129.

¹² D. S. Evans, 'Irish and the languages of post-Roman Wales', *Studies* 68 (1979), 19-32; T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'Language and society among the Insular Celts AD 400-1000', in *The Celtic World*, ed. M. J. Green, London, Routledge, 1995, pp. 703-36. For recent discussions of Vortipor, the possible epigraphic evidence for him, and his political context: D. N. Dumville, 'The idea of government in Sub-Roman Britain', in *After Empire: towards an ethnology of Europe's barbarians*, ed. G. Ausenda, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1995, pp. 177-216; E. Hamp, 'Voteporigis Protictoris', *Studia Celtica* 30 (1996), 293; N. Edwards, 'Early medieval inscribed stones and stone sculpture in Wales: context and function', *Medieval Archaeology* 45 (2001), 5-16 (pp. 27-8); K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 184-88 and pp. 190-1; P. Sims-Williams, *The Celtic Inscriptions of Britain: Phonology and chronology, c.400-1200*, Oxford, The Philological Society/Blackwell, 2003, pp. 346-7.

¹³ A. L. F. Rivet and C. Smith, *The Place-names of Roman Britain*, London, Batsford, 1979; *The Barrington atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (2 vols.), ed. R. J. Talbert, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000; *Ptolemy: towards a linguistic atlas of the earliest Celtic place-names in Europe*, ed. D. N. Parsons and P. Sims-Williams, Aberystwyth, CMCS, 2000.

¹⁴ G. Williams, 'Recent work on rural settlement in later prehistoric and early historic Dyfed', *Antiquaries Journal* 68 (1988), 30-54; G. Williams and H. Mytum (ed. K. Blockley), *Llawhaden, Dyfed. Excavations on a group of small enclosures, 1980-4*, Oxford, BAR, 1998.

¹⁵ K. R. Dark, *Discovery By Design*, Oxford, BAR, 1994 ch.2.

¹⁶ L. Laing, 'The romanization of Ireland in the fifth century', *Peritia* 4 (1985), 261-78; H. C. Mytum, *The origins of Early Christian Ireland*, London and New York, Routledge, 1992.

¹⁷ J. B. Stevenson, 'The beginnings of literacy in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 89C (1989), 127-65; D. McManus, *A guide to ogam*, Maynooth, An Sagart, 1991.

¹⁸ W. Pohl, 'Conceptions of ethnicity in early medieval studies', *Archaeologia Polonia* 29 (1998), 39-49; W. Pohl, 'Conceptions of ethnicity in early medieval studies' in *Debating the middle ages: issues and readings*, ed. L. K. Little and B. H. Rosenwein, Oxford, Blackwell, 1998, pp. 15-24.

¹⁹ RCAHMS, *Argyll Volume 4. Iona*, Edinburgh, The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments of Scotland, 1982, p. 13; E. Campbell and A. Lane, 'The Pottery', in *Iona: some results of recent work*, ed. A. Haggerty, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 118 (for 1988), pp. 203-13; F. McCormick, 'Iona: the archaeology of the early monastery', in *Studies in the Cult of Saint Columba*, ed. C. Bourke, Dublin, Four Courts Press, 1997, pp. 45-68 (p. 63); A. Lane and E. Campbell, *Dunadd. An early Dalriadic capital*, Oxford, Oxbow, 2000, especially pp. 104, 240-1 and 261-2.

²⁰ For discussions of the archaeology of Dalriada and its context: S. M. Foster, *Picts, Gaels and Scots*, London, Batsford/Historic Scotland, 1996; A. Lane and E. Campbell, *Dunadd. An early Dalriadic capital*, Oxford, Oxbow, 2000, especially pp. 23-6 and 252-61.

²¹ The subject of ethnic terminology and self-definition among the Britons has been recently discussed by Chris Snyder: C. A. Snyder, *An age of tyrants. Britain and the Britons A.D. 400-600*, Stroud, Tempus, 1998; C. A. Snyder, *The Britons*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1998.

²² The interpretation that southwest Wales and southwest Scotland had contained Irish-speaking populations since the Iron Age was first proposed in: K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 188-90 and 222-3. For Ewan Campbell's arguments: E. Campbell, 'Were the Scots Irish?', *Antiquity* 75 (2001), 285-92. See also: A. Lane and E. Campbell, 2000 *Dunadd. An early Dalriadic capital*, Oxford, Oxbow, 2000, pp. 32-4.

²³ K. R. Dark, *Civitas to Kingdom*, London, Leicester University Press London, 1994, p. 110.

²⁴ The sudden disjuncture between late fourth-century and fifth-century material culture in the east and eastern Midlands of England has noted by many scholars, for example: W. H. C. Frend, 'Pagans, Christians and the "barbarian conspiracy" of A.D. 367 in Roman Britain', *Britannia* 23 (1992), 121-31. Much relevant recent archaeological work is awaiting publication and I am indebted to Jude Plouviez for discussing the matter with me.

²⁵ K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 168-9.

²⁶ L. Fleuriot, *Les origines de la Bretagne*, Paris, 1980; P. Galliou and M. Jones, *The Bretons*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1991; P.-R. Giot, P. Guignon and B.

Merdrignac, *The British settlement of Brittany: the first Bretons in Armorica*, Stroud, Tempus, 2003.

²⁷ E. A. Thompson, 'Britonia', in *Christianity in Britain 300-700*, ed. M. W. Barley and R. P. C. Hanson, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1968, pp. 201-5; L. Fleuriot, *Les origines de la Bretagne*, Paris, Payot, 1980, pp. 98-109, 135-7.

²⁸ D. N. Dumville, 'Gildas and Uinniau', in *Gildas: New Approaches*, ed. M. Lapidge and D. N. Dumville, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1984, pp. 207-14; T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'Britons in Ireland c.550-800', in *Ildánach Ildirech*, ed. M. Lapidge and D. N. Dumville, Andover and Aberyswyth, Celtic Studies, 1999, pp. 15-26; D. N. Dumville, 'British missionary activity in Ireland', in *St Patrick AD 493-1993*, ed. D. N. Dumville et al., Woodbridge, Boydell, 1993, pp. 133-45.

²⁹ R. Reece, 'Models of continuity', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 8.2 (1989), 231-6; A. Woolf, 'When England turned English', *British Archaeological News* ns.18 (1994), 5.

³⁰ The suggestion originated with: P. Dixon, 'How Saxon is the Saxon House?', in *Structural reconstruction*, ed. P. Drury, Oxford, BAR, 1982, pp. 275-86. For an up-to-date discussion of 'Anglo-Saxon' structures in their European context: H. Hamerow, *Early medieval settlements: archaeology of rural communities*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002. For some potentially British characteristics of 'Anglo-Saxon' burials: R. H. White, *Roman and Celtic objects from Anglo-Saxon graves*, Oxford, BAR, 1988; E. O'Brien, *Post-Roman Britain to Anglo-Saxon England: burial practices reviewed*, Oxford, BAR, 1999. For comparison: R. Philpott, *Burial practices in Roman Britain*, Oxford, BAR, 1991.

³¹ J. Graham-Campbell, 'Dinas Powys metalwork and the dating of enamelled zoomorphic penannular brooches', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 38 (1991), 220-32.

³² C. M. Hills, 'Spong Hill and the Adventus Saxonum', in *Spaces of the living and the dead*, ed. C. E. Karkov, K. M. Wilham- Crowley and B. K. Young, Oxford, Oxbow, 1999, pp. 15-26.

³³ For the archaeology of this area in the fifth century: J. Hines, *The Scandinavian character of Anglian England in the pre-Viking period*, Oxford, BAR, 1984; J. Hines, 'The Scandinavian character of Anglian England: an update', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, ed. M. Carver, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1992, pp. 315-29; C. Scull, 'Before Sutton Hoo: structures of power and society in early East Anglia', in *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, ed. M. Carver, Woodbridge, Boydell 1992, pp. 3-24.

³⁴ K. R. Dark 2000 *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 97-103.

³⁵ K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, pp. 71-87; H. Williams, 'Remains of pagan Saxondom – the study of Anglo-Saxon cremation rites', in *Burial in early medieval England and Wales*, ed. S. Lucy and A. Reynolds, London, Maney, 2002, pp. 47-71.

³⁶ H. W. Böhme, 'Das Ende der Römerherrschaft in Britannien und die Angelsächsische Besiedlung Englands im 5 Jahrhundert', *Jahrbuch des Romisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums Mainz* 33 (1986), 469-574; J. Hines, 'Philology, archaeology and the *Adventus Saxonum vel Anglorum*' in *Britain 400-600*, ed. A. Bammesberger and A. Wollmann, Heidelberg, Winter, 1990, pp. 17-136.

³⁷ D. N. Dumville, 'The chronology of *De Excidio Britanniae* Book 1', in *Gildas: New Approaches*, ed. M. Lapidge and D. N. Dumville, Woodbridge, Boydell, 1984, pp. 61-84; K. R. Dark, *Britain and the end of the Roman Empire*, Stroud, Tempus, 2000, p. 35 and pp. 48-50